FARM LABOR NEWS

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Planters Seek Veterans Aid To Fight Unions

James T. Karam, a business man of Lake Village, Arkansas, has started the Veterans Industrial Association which seeks to line up ex-servicemen to fight labor unions.

Over in Marianna, Ark., another group called the Free Enterprise Association has been incorporated. They also propose to fight liberal legislation and labor organization. They have plenty of money and boast of having published a letter to Congress and state that 51 other groups in 17 states have asked for 20,000 copies to be distributed. The treasurer of the Free Enterprise Association is Jim Crain, general manager of the 50,000 acre Lee Wilson plantation. He receives a salary of $35,000 a year. Crain is the lord of this domain which contains 10,000 human beings, both Negro and white, who do not know the meaning of freedom. That is apparently the kind of free enterprise both of these groups want.

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Federal Grand Jury Refuses To Indict Alabama Planter

The case against Robert Dickson, Lowndes County, Alabama planter, who was charged with holding Aaron Smith, a Negro sharecropper, in slavery on his plantation, has been dismissed by a Federal Grand Jury in Montgomery.

U. S. Commissioner Wallace Sloan stated that the Grand Jury refused to act although testimoney was given to show that Dickson would not let Smith leave his plantation to take another job. Smith had been on Dickson's plantation for 20 years.

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Get A Health Card For Food Plant Work

All members of the Union are notified to get a health card if they expect to go out on jobs this summer. State laws require workers in food plants to have a card showing that they are free of disease. Workers may go to the county health doctor for a blood test or to a private doctor. In most rural towns it takes from two to three weeks to get a health card. Workers who have bad blood can take short treatments and get rid of the disease. Such treatments are provided by the state.

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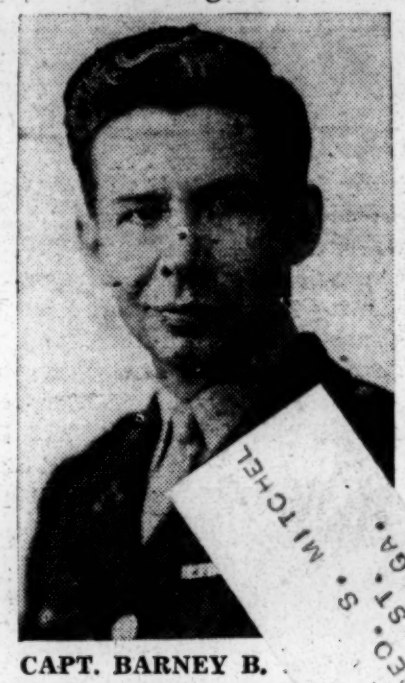
A REPORT ON FARM LABOR

The U. S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Labor Report of March 13, says that there are 1,489,000 hired farm laborers at work. There are 6,744,000 family workers employed. The average day on the farm is 9½ hours. There are now 28,357 foreign workers employed on the land.

New Organizer



CAPT. BARNEY B.

Captain Barney B. T. been appointed as Orga. Director for the National Far. bor Union. Captain Taylor b his duties on March 26th.

Taylor, who is a native of Texas, now makes his home in Little Rock, Arkansas. He is 34 years of age and was recently retired by the U. S. Army for disabilities incurred in combat. Prior to the war, Taylor was employed by the Washington (D. C.) Post. He was president of the Washington Newspaper Guild in the Southern states.

Taylor said, "While the invasion of France was going on, I decided that I would return to the South and work for a labor organization of low paid workers. I learned that the people represented by the National Farm Labor Union were the lowest paid workers in the country. I asked H. L. Mitchell, President of the Union, for a job—and he made me Organization Director."

Taylor was reared on a farm. He was educated in the public schools of Belton, Texas and at Texas A & M College. He began work in 1935 for the Washington Post. He enlisted in the infantry in 1942 as a private and rose to the rank of captain. He was given a battlefield promotion from second to first lieutenant during the invasion of France. He was twice wounded on the Normandy Beachhead. He lost the sight of an eye on June 16, 1944, but remained in the battle until a shell fragment broke his right leg. After being hospitalized in England, he was returned to the United States and was attached to the Headquarters staff of the Army Ground Forces in Washington. The army then sent him on a tour of the war plants of the nation. He was a featured speaker at a number of conventions of A. F. of L. and C. I. O. unions.

Taylor has the Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster, Combat Infantryman's Badge, and Victory Medal. He was recommended for the Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism.

In his work for the Union, Captain Taylor will be in charge of organization work in Arkansas, Alabama, Missouri, Mississippi, Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and other states where the National Farm Labor Union has organization.

Farm Labor Conference Meets At Kennett, Mo.

Forty three Union leaders and rural preachers met in the school house on the Delmo Labor Homes near Kennett, Mo., on March 26th. and 27th., to work out plans to raise the incomes of farm labor families in that section of the cotton belt.

In opening the meeting, President Mitchell stated that the conference was called to put into effect the Union's program of higher wages for farm labor, seasonal jobs, building co-operatives, and protecting the Missouri laborers' rights by political action. All men and women were urged to qualify as voters and to be ready to vote as a block for candidates they decide to support.

Captain Barney B. Taylor, new Organization Director, followed with a statement that the Union proposed to make southeast Missouri an example of solid trade union organization.

Albert Hahn, faculty member of LeMoyne College in Memphis, led the discussion of religion and race relations. He illustrated his talk with motion pictures entitled, "All Men Are Brothers," and "The Greater Victory."

An interesting visitor at the conference was John Rust, inventor of the cotton picking machine, who showed movies of this machine at work.

Rev. David S. Burgess of East Prairie was the discussion leader on community problems of farm labor and the rural church. He and Vice President F. R. Betton served as chairmen of the conference.

A highlight of the program was the solid instruction given to the group by A. E. Cox on the building of co-operatives. The motion picture, "The Lord Helps Those Who Help Each Other" was shown.

Each night during the conference there was public speaking and free movies which were attended by farm labor families living in the Delmo Homes and surrounding communities. Western movies and comedies were shown both nights and were enjoyed by grown ups and children alike. The most popular picture shown was "The River" as everyone knew the destruction often caused in their lives by the mighty Mississippi.

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Co-Op Store Starts At Pine Bluff, Ark.

On March 23, a meeting was held by the members of the Pike Local near Pine Bluff to discuss the opening of a Farm Labor Co-operative Store in their community. Carrie Dilworth, manager of the Gould Co-operative Store, reports that the group elected a board of directors composed of Luther Maddox, Chairman; A. W. Colen, Secretary; Issac Slater, Walter Jackson, and Albert Lyas. Annie Mae Nicholson was chosen as manager.

Union Leads Fight On Labor Wage Ceilings

If the cotton choppers' wage ceiling of $2 to $2.50 per day is adopted in the Mississippi referendum April 2, the National Farm Labor Union as a last resort, will call upon all cotton choppers to refuse to work. H. L. Mitchell, Union President, announced that a vigorous campaign against the ceiling has been under taken. Ten thousand handbills calling upon cotton producers to vote the Department of Agriculture out of their business, have been distributed.

If the ceiling is approved in Mississippi on April 2, we know that every other cotton producing state in the South and West will follow. Plans are being made to challenge the wage ceilings in the courts. Lawyers will be employed to take the case through the U. S. Courts, and if this fails the Union will call on all cotton choppers to refuse to work for the miserable wage the U. S. Department of Agriculture is seeking to impose on the lowest paid workers in all America.

This action followed the statement by L. I. Jones, USDA Wage Board Chairman, that the vote would be taken at the end of a hearing in Cleveland, Miss. In his first public appearance, Captain Barney B. Taylor attended the Cleveland meeting and expressed the opposition of the National Farm Labor Union to the proposal to put ceilings on farm laborers' wages.

Assurance of support for the fight against wage ceilings on farm labor has been received from President William Green of the A. F. of L; President James G. Patton of the National Farmers Union; and the National Association for Advancement of Colored People. The C.I.O. is also expected to use its influence against the ceilings on farm labor.

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Delta Council Meets

The Delta District Council of the National Farm Labor Union met March 30, in Dumas, Arkansas, to perfect their organization which has been extended to include all locals in southern Arkansas and the Mississippi Delta. The District Council is made up of 2 strong local unions whose delegates meet regularly each month. C. H. Bolden is President; Granville Ward is Vice President; and Jesse Leach, Secretary.

The meeting in Dumas was addressed by Captain Taylor and Vice President Betton who reported an over flow crowd of members present from both states to hear the speaking. On Friday night before the District Council meeting, a special meeting attended by 35 families was held at the Union Church, nine miles south of Dumas. This meeting was arranged by local organizer J. M. Lambert and was addressed by Captain Barney Taylor.

Farm Veterans Should Know About Benefits

"On the farm training" is possible for veterans of World War II who want to farm. An ex-serviceman engaged in farming his own land or farming another's land as a tenant or sharecropper, may draw $65 per month if single and $90 per month if married. Farm boys who are interested may see their local Veterans Administration officer or the County Agent in his county about this program.

One Year Free Training

Every honorably discharged serviceman is entitled to one year's training in any school of his choice to learn a trade. The government is obligated to pay up to $500 a year tuition and to pay the veteran $65 per month if single, or $90 a month if married. while taking such training. Application must be made to the nearest Veterans Administration Office.

Go To School Or College

Boys under 25 years of age whose education was interrupted by military service, may get schooling in any high school or college for four years at government expense.

Employment Pay

All veterans who are without work are entitled to unemployment benefit payments of $25 a week for a period of one year after being honorably discharged. To get unemployment benefit payments, the veteran must first register at the nearest U. S. Employment Service Office. If he cannot be placed on a job at his trade or calling, he is then entitled to receive $25 a week as long as he is out of work during the period of one year. Ex-servicemen who have not made $1,200 a year are entitle to draw the difference between their earnings and this amount, during the year.

To take advantage of any of the above provisions of the G. I. Bill, ex-servicemen must apply within two years after being discharged.

How To Make Application

We advise all veterans to make application for one or more of the benefits to which they are entitled. Although there are not many schools or places for training and only a few jobs are open in rural areas, every ex-serviceman should make application. Local offices of the U. S. Employment Service often try to get ex-servicemen to take low paid jobs instead of taking some type of training or going to school.

Veteran Administration officials often seem to think that all a poor white or Negro ex-serviceman in the South needs is a job paying $2 a day.

Do You Need Help?

The National Farm Labor Union wants to hear from ex-servicemen who have tried to go back to school, take training, or get jobs or unemployment pay and failed. Tell us the office you went to and what the person told you. We will investigate your situation and help you.

Young People Start Farm Union Clubs

By MAE PEARL KELLY

The need for a youth organization in the National Farm Labor Union has been known for a long time. The St. Louis convention approved such an organization and the Executive Council appointed a sub committee to work out a program. Members of the committee are Miss Dorothy Dowe, our Secretary, Mrs. Carrie Dilworth, and myself.

A manual and guide for the organization of Juniors, age 6 to 10 years, and of Union Reserves, 10 to 16 years of age, has been prepared. This manual will soon be ready to send out to locals who have elected leaders for the young people's work. Local officers who are interested can write to Miss Dorothy Dowe, Box 443, Memphis 1, Tenn., and she will send them a copy of the Manual and Guide for Youth Organization.

I have found a lot of interest in locals I visited during the past month. Mrs. Dilworth has an organization set up at Gould that has been working for over a year. They have a Kiddie Band, and are planning other activities for the older children. In Missouri, Mrs. Black of Lilbourn, Mrs. Johnson of Wardell, and Mrs. Beck of Gobler, are beginning work as youth leaders in their locals.

LABOR WANTED

Men Or Women

Contracts for recruiting and transporting workers to jobs this spring and summer are now being made.

Good workers are needed for seasonal jobs in canneries and on farms out of the South, during the spring and summer months when there is little to do on cotton farms.

Members of the Union 18 years of age and not over 60, if in good health, will be considered for these jobs.

The Union will arrange for transportation, see that sanitary housing is provided on the job. Union wage rates are paid.

Members of the Union who want to go out on a job should register now by filling out and mailing the blankbelow. The members will then be notified when a job is open for him.

Tear Off And Mail To Box 443, Memphis 1, Tenn.

My Name Is _____ My Age Is_____yrs.

My Address Is _____ (ROUTE NUMBER) _____ (BOX NUMBER) _____ (TOWN) _____ (STATE)

I am White——Colored——I will be ready for a job about _____ (DATE)

I will work until _____ (DATE)

Do you want to take your family with you_____. If so, give ages of each member _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Co-Ops---The People's Business---A Hope For South's Rural People

By A. E. COX

The rural people of the South will not get a better living until their day to day problems are handled on a local basis. Government cannot do everything and big business is not concerned with our plight. One man cannot do it by himself. There is a way open if we are willing to get together.

Many farm people have organized co-operatives. There is no reason the same cannot be done here in the South. Interest in co-operative stores is growing in our local unions. Meetings are being held in several districts for the purpose of teaching the way to go about setting up co-operatives. A study group should be held in every local union so that members can learn about the co-operative plan.

The first thing to learn is how to work together. It is simple if we stop to think. To co-operate means to act or work together for some common good. It means working together for our fellow members and for all men who share our burdens and hopes.

Before any kind of co-operative business is started, there are some rules to learn. Over 100 years of business shows a way of operating co-operatives that is sound. The following principles or "ways" of co-operation have been tested. They work.

1. Open Membership

Open membership is practiced by all true co-operatives. Any person who has to buy goods is a consumer of goods. Any consumer is entitled to benefits of co-operative business. Rules can be set up to refuse membership in a co-operative to any person whose influence or action would hurt the co-operative business. Otherwise, all who want to take part in building a co-operative should be admitted.

2. Co-Ops Are Democratic—One Member—One Vote

When the principle of "One member, One Vote" is applied to business, the power of the dollar is replaced by the rule of men. In ordinary business, the goods and services are sold for the profit of one man or a corporation. In a co-operative business the people control the dollars. Each shareholder in a co-operative has one vote, whether he owns one share or ten shares. Co-operatives cannot work unless each shareholder takes an active part in the business.

3. Co-Ops Pay Little Interest

If the people are to control a co-operative business they must put up the money to own it. This is done by members taking out shares to raise the capital to operate on. The co-operative business is interested in serving its members and is not interested in making a profit. Some co-operatives pay a little interest on the capital the members put up, this is usually about one cent on the dollar a year. Where the amount each member puts up to start a business is small, no interest may be paid on the capital stock.

5. Co-Ops Sell For Cash Only

Co-operatives sell to the members for cash only. Interest and carrying charges in doing credit business are done away with. There are no bad debts. If credit were given in a co-operative, all members would suffer. When there are no bad debts, expenses are cut. There is not as much bookkeeping. Higher rebates can be paid on purchases that each member makes. All learn to buy for cash and thrift is encouraged in other matters as well.

4. Co-Ops Pay Rebates To Customers

The earnings of co-operative business are returned to the member in proportion to the amount of goods he buys. The member who gets the largest rebates or patronage dividends is the member who buys the most goods or services sold by the co-operative business.

6. No Discrimination In Co-Ops

Co-operative businesses serve persons of many races, religions, and political beliefs. Co-operatives are neutral as far as race, religion, and politics are concerned. However, members of a co-operative should take part in politics, go to church, belong to their Union, but no one should bring any of these matters into the business of the co-operatives. Everyone is entitled to his own opinions in such matters.

7. Co-Ops Educate

No co-operative business can succeed unless it has an informed membership. Members can start off understanding the principles of operating a co-operative but if they do not continue to learn and educate others, the co-operative business will eventually die.

8. Co-Ops Must Grow

Building up the business enables a co-operative to meet the needs of its members. New kinds of goods and services should not be handled until the co-operative has capital and trained men to expand the business in new fields. No loans should be made to expand the business. Use the reserve fund, get new members, or urge old members to take out more shares.

With these eight principles well understood there is no reason that members of the National Farm Labor Union cannot learn to set up and operate co-operative stores or buying clubs to handle staple goods we all need. All it takes is a few good people and a leader willing to work hard to build a co-operative. Next month I shall write about buying clubs and co-operative stores.

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DISTRICT MEETINGS IN ARK.

The meeting dates of District Councils are as follows:

First Saturday of each month, Central Ark. District Council meets at Cotton Plant, Ark., at the Presbyterian Academy.

The second Saturday in each month the Northeast Arkansas District Council meets at the Union Hall, 117 Rosser St., Forrest City, Ark.

The third Saturday in each month the Delta District Council meets at Dumas, Ark., at the Union Baptist Church.

Any member in good standing may attend a District Council meeting.

The Good Life At Delmo Homes

By REV. DAVID S. BURGESS
"The Preacher"

Last month nearly all of the residents of the Delmo Labor Homes signed contracts to purchase their homes. There are 549 houses in the Delmo projects, located at East Prairie, Gray Ridge, Kennett, Lilbourn, Morehouse, Wardell, and Wyatt, in Missouri. Each of the families who have bought homes will have 8 years to finish paying for them.

Spring Gardens Planted

Now that spring has come, homes are being painted and repaired in all nine projects. Many families have bought and set out fruit trees. Half acre gardens, large enough for any man's family are being planted. There is a keen rivalry as to who will have the earliest and best garden.

Captain Taylor In Missouri

Barney Taylor, the new Organization Director for the Union, took southeast Missouri by storm in the middle of March. Captain Taylor, bedecked in his army uniform (no longer worn since his terminal leave is over) trooped from Kennett to Cape Girardeau to spread the news that the National Farm Labor Union was in earnest when it said, "Let's make southeast Missouri the testing ground—an example of solid union organization for the whole South." Captain Taylor will soon return to help put this into effect.

Qualify To Vote In Missouri

The primary elections in Missouri will take place on August 6th., this year. All persons over 21 years of age who have lived in the state at least one year are eligible to vote in all elections. They must have been residents of the county and voting precinct at least thirty days. All who wish to vote must register at the time of the primary elections. Those who have voted before in the same election place do not have to register again. All members of the Union and all project residents, both men and women, are urged to get ready for the August elections. If we will first decide who to vote for and then all vote together as a unit, we can decide any election in the seven southeast Missouri counties.

Sunday School At East Prairie And Kennett

Sunday schools have been started at East Prairie and at the Kennett project. Community churches may some day arise from both. The Preacher offers his service free to the leaders of any project to help start a Sunday school.

The Bible Speaks

A new pamphlet, "The Bible Speaks to Labor," written by he Preacher, is now ready. You can buy a copy for 10¢ by writing to me at Box 315, East Prairie, Mo. The pamphlet deals with a study of Christian faith in relation to unionism in the South. Free copies will be presented to all ministers of the Gospel.

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When You Finish Reading "FARM LABOR NEWS" Pass It On To Your Neighbor.

Our Guest Column—

Unity On The Picket Line

By FRANCES PERKINS
Former Secretary of Labor

The strikes which are so prevalent at the present time and which offer such difficult problems to those who would keep the reconversion of industrial life in the United States moving evenly and rapidly, exhibit many tensions and many strains between different parts of the population.

One thing, however, is notable and that is, that up to date the tensions between whites and Negroes that so often are illustrated during strikes seem to be lacking. For this one can give thanks. At the same time one sees signs that there perhaps has been a real advance in the understanding of the identity of interest between colored and white workers in these great struggles for the improvement of wages, working conditions and status in our industrial system. In other years and in other periods there has often been great friction.

It begins to appear today that many white labor leaders and members of labor unions are recognizing not only the rights but the needs of Negro workers, and realizing that in modern intricate industry the opportunities of all are reduced by the reduction in standards for any one group. Within the unions themselves a determination has risen to stand together. At any rate, there is today a demonstration of cooperation and good feeling which is encouraging.

In the past there has often been temptation offered to the Negro workers, who except in time of strike were discriminated against in employment, to go back to work and break the strike, or to come in from the South driven by poverty and the anticipation of better incomes to take the jobs of white strikers. The Negroes are resisting this temptation if it offered today, and the white workers are, at least, reducing their prejudices and coming to the realization of the essential oneness of economic interest between them all. Competition between the two races in terms of wage and job discrimination cannot but work out badly for both and for the whole community. One is clearly heartened by this demonstration of true progress.

It is pointed out sometimes, and there is some evidence that it is true, that there is a systematic and deliberate appeal being carried on among Negroes to develop a kind of unthinking anti-Semitism among them. It is the same type of social sin which exists in many areas in the general prejudices of whites against colored people, of Gentiles against Jews, and of Protestants against Catholics. It will be unfortunate if such feeling gains headway. The Jewish people of the United States have done a great deal to assist the Negroes in improving their economic and social conditions. The accident of a Jewish landlord of a Negro tenement house, or of a Jewish storekeeper pressing for the payment of his bill on Saturday night must not be translated into a general conclusion that it is a racial or religious tension which exists. Both groups suffer from prejudice and both groups must guard against succumbing to prejudice. It is fortunate that leaders of all sides recognize this and participate in activities to reduce these hazards.

The attitude of many leaders of the Negro press which definitely warns against feelings which can be said to be anti-Jewish and anti-Catholic is very wholesome. The Negro population may share the current feeling of prejudice of the moment in the community in which they live, but since they themselves have been the victims of prejudice so often, it is doubly regrettable when they permit themselves to feel and act on prejudice against other minority groups. The finest Negroes who have made the most contribution to American life have been men who were notable free of these prejudices and who emphasized in their own lives the constructive and creative qualities of human beings who showed by their tolerance and their courtesy even to those who had offended them, a quality of dignity and nobility which is always the mark of the great hearted. The progress of Negroes in industry in recent years and their responsible participation in many trade unions has done much to establish the idea of equal pay for equal work to the immense advantage of both races.

John Gammill, Union Leader, Dies In Oklahoma

John Gammill, member of the National Executive Council, died suddenly at his home near Clearview, Oklahoma, on February 26th. He was 55 years of age. He leaves his wife, Mrs. Iola Love Gammill; his father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Gammill; and one sister, Mrs. Lee Dora Bryson of Round Pond, Ark.

John Gammill was born in Mississippi, but moved to the Indian Territory before Oklahoma became a state. His family were members of the highly civilized Indian tribe, the Creeks, whose site of government was at Okmulgee. He grew up near Boley and attended public school. When he reached manhood, he left Oklahoma, working out of Louisville, Ky., as a fireman on a railway locomotive.

During the great depression of the 1930's he came to eastern Arkansas. He went by his mother's name of Alford. In 1935, while making a sharecrop on a big plantation near Widener, in St. Francis County, he helped to organize the Southern Tenant Farmers Union. He was chosen President of the Percy Local. He took part in the cotton choppers' strike in the spring of 1936 and became a leader in his county Union. In 1937 he was elected as a delegate to the Muskogee convention and every year thereafter he attended the Union conventions. Members of the Union found him to be thoroughly honest, upright, and one whose loyalty was never questioned. He was repeatedly elected as a member of the Union's Executive Council. He was re-elected as a member of the National Executive Council by the St. Louis convention, December 14, 1945. He and ex-president Butler wrote the Union's manual which is used by all locals.

In 1943, John Alford left Arkansas and returned to his former home in Oklahoma from whence he had fled many years before. A few months later, he attended a meeting of the Executive Council and showed his fellow officers a clipping from his home town newspaper which gave the story of the return of John Alford Gammill to Oklahoma. He had been completely cleared of the killing of a man 30 years before. The newspaper told of how John Gammill had appeared suddenly to demand trial and that witnesses summoned from long distances appeared to back up his story that the man who had been killed was abusing a woman at a dance and when John stepped in between them, the man struck him with a knife and John then killed him in self defense.

The community was so impressed with the strong character of John Gammill that he was chosen as a Peace Officer. He also organized a strong Union local at Clearview.

The life and works of this good man will be a monument more enduring than marble or granite.

Farm Machines

Members Write Farm Labor News

Editor
Farm Labor News

Dear Sir:

I am enclosing a clipping from the Florence Times. It is headed, "Machinery To Relieve Back Breaking Toil." The House of Haves has just about gotten farming fixed. I cannot find any place where the tenant farmer and sharecropper fit in this machine age. I am going to liken the machine age in farming to the man who built his house upon the sand. The storm came and the wind blew and the house fell, and great was the fall thereof.

R. E. PARIS
Route 4, Florence, Ala.

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Says Union Fight Helps Day Laborer

Dear Sirs:

I appreciate the words you put in for the poor day laborer and cotton chopper on this ceiling business. I did not like what L. I. Jones, Chairman of the Miss. USDA Wage Board had to say. We know for sure that the day laborer can't live on $2 or $2.50 a day. 20¢ or 25¢ an hour is not enough these days. The planters know that the labor has moved off the plantations to town where they can get better pay than by sharecropping. When the planter sells his cotton, does he sell to the man who pays him the least? The planters are driving the labor out of the cotton country. I know many that left here and went to Florida and California. Also, there are many who used to come down from the hills to pick cotton. They did not come when they put that ceiling on cotton picking. I know some planters who never picked a boll of cotton on some of their land. They lost over $100 a bale because they would not pay the day laborer a fair wage.

ARTHUR WOLFORD
Leachville, Ark.

Flame Throwing Cotton Chopper Threatens The Man With The Hoe

A weapon of warfare now threatens to take the place of the "Man With the Hoe" in the cotton fields. A flame thrower is being manufactured that will chop 25 acres of cotton in the time it takes a man or woman to chop a half acre. The machine was invented by an Alabama planter, Price McLemore of Montgomery. Tests by the government experiment station in Stoneville, Miss., show that the machine can chop an acre of cotton at a cost of 48¢. At the low wage of $2.50 a day paid farm labor, the cost of chopping an acre of cotton is about $5 a day.

Cost Little To Chop Cotton

Together with the mechanical cotton picker, the flame throwing cotton chopper will permit large cotton planters to completely mechanize their farming operations. Cotton can then be raised on a big plantation at a profit if sold for 6¢ a pound. The big planters look forward to the time when they can re-gain the world cotton market and compete with rayons and other substitute fibers.

Chopper Sells Cheap

The machine pictured above is manufactured by the New Holland Machine Co. in Pennsylvania. Similar machines are being manufactured in Clarksdale, Miss. A two row burner sells at Clarksdale for $295 and a four row burner for $550. Some plantations are constructing their own cotton choppers.

The Sizz Weeder

The "Sizz Weeder," as it is called, kills weeds and also the boll weevil but does not hurt the cotton stalk. It can be used with a tractor or pulled by a mule. One kind burns coal oil and another, butane gas. The fuel is forced into the burners by a pump operated by hand or tractor. A sheet of fire 10 inches wide and 22 inches long cuts the grass from around the cotton.

Government May Pay Planter To Mechanize

The Department of Agriculture proposes a program to pay the farm owners for shifting from cotton to other kinds of farming. It expresses a pious hope that the displaced workers will find jobs in industry. No plans are made to take of farm laborers or to pay them subsidies, or provide relief to families who are to be shifted off the land.

End Of Sharecropping System

Needless to say, these machines sound the death knell of the sharecropper system in the South and they also mean the end of the small farm owner producing cotton.

The Department of Agriculture in a recent statement entitled, "Reconversion of Cotton Farming," estimated that one half of the present population engaged in cotton farming will lose their places on the land within 5 to 10 years.

Machine Won't Buy Groceries

Nothing is said about the effect on small business people and their families in the rural towns who may expect to lose over half of their customers in less than 10 years. The steel machines will not buy groceries on Saturday, nor will they wear overalls or gingham dresses.

The little business man in rural towns of the South has less organization than the sharecroppers or farm laborers. He has no voice to make his needs known. He may belong to the Farm Bureau, the local Chamber of Commerce, the Lions Club, etc., but all represent the interests of the big cotton growers.

Members Leave For Jobs In New Jersey

Nearly 100 members of the Union, both men and women, left April 4th., for jobs in Swedesboro, New Jersey. They will work in the Edgar F. Hurff Co., cannery for the next three months. Some of the workers plan to remain until the cotton picking season next fall. Others will return for two or three weeks during July and go back to New Jersey for the tomato season in July, August, and September.

Contracts have been signed by the unions and companies providing jobs for several hundred workers during the spring and summer months. Local officers and organizers will be notified of future shipments. The organized migration plan is worked out through membership transfer from the National Farm Labor Union to the Meat and Cannery Workers Union, Local 56, of Camden, N. J. It has been in successful operation for the past three years and several thousand southern workers have benefited from these jobs when they were out of work in the cotton fields.

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Bill Johnson Reports—

Something has happened here in Missouri for the first time. One of the largest cotton planters in this section called me over to talk to him. He said he had read one of the Union newspapers and that he liked some of it mighty well. It seems that he carried the paper down to the Rotary Club meeting and talked the Union situation over with them. He thought they were going to throw him out when he told the boys they might as well quiet down and consider. He told the club members that this Union is serious and we might as well get ready to dicker with those fellows. The club took a vote on inviting a Union speaker in to address the next meeting. The vote tied but the planter expects to have a Union representative invited to a meeting some time soon.

THE FOUR FREEDOMS FUND

The following members made contributions during the month to the Fund.

Dave Bell, Gould, Ark.
Hamp Berry, Boyle, Miss.
Mattie Davis, Forrest City, Ark.
Maggie Fields, Gould, Ark.
Littie Freeman, Forrest City, Ark.
C. F. Foster, Augusta, Ark.
John C. Granberry, San Antonio, Texas
Rosie Green, Gould, Ark.
Bud Haile, Boyle, Miss.
William Hall, Gould, Ark.
Henderson Hill, Stuttgart, Ark.
Buck Jackson, Howell, Ark.
James Jones, Gould, Ark.
Jimmie Jones, Gould, Ark.
Mary Jones, Gould, Ark.
Melvin Jones, Gould, Ark.
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North To Literacy

By Agnes E. Meyer

Mass Migration Of Negroes

Clarksdale, Miss., May 6.—The intelligent analysis of the Hopson brothers indicates that the ever-increasing volume of Negro migration from the South to the North has very little, if any, connection with the mechanization of cotton. It is mainly a postwar phenomenon which the last World War could lead us to expect. The millions of Negro warworkers who left the South are not coming back in great numbers. These people are now sending for their friends and relatives. The Negro veterans will not put up with the lack of adequate educational facilities throughout the South. In Mississippi, there are 83,000 Negro veterans and 200 places for them in local institutions of higher learning. They are flocking North, East and West for better professional training and better job opportunities. As soon as they are settled, they, too, will send for their families.

Who has to worry about this exodus? Certainly not the South, where white and Negro alike welcome a better balance between the two populations. It is the North, the Midwest and the Atlantic Coast cities that must face the problem. They are now receiving only the advance battalions of the army that is soon to follow. During the war the Negro slums in our Northern and Midwestern industrial cities became shamefully overcrowded.

What are we going to do to protect this great postwar migration of Negro families and the cities that will not be able to give them all a living wage? We were heedless about the heavy migration of people into our war production centers. We are equally heedless now about the heavy remigration that is taking place.

"Our Negro population is not afraid of mechanization," said Mrs. Lillian Rogers Johnson, superintendent of Negro schools in Coahoma County. "On the whole, mechanization will be the emancipation of the Negroes who remain here. The old share-cropper system was slavery. It wasn't bad for those who had a good landlord that paid the market price. But the worker was wholly at the mercy of his employer and the bad ones took advantage of their power. This type of landlord now feels bitter toward the Negro. Since labor began to be scarce, they feel 'the Negro has let us down when we needed him most.' Of course the share-cropper has become unreliable under this system and walks out on the landlord, often induced to do so by some other farmer. If the Negro in the Delta is shiftless and incompetent, it is this system of slavery that made him so.

"Mechanization will emancipate the landlords as well as the worker because this unfair dealing often made them mean and narrow in outlook. It will be an education for both groups.

"Many white superintendents of schools in Mississippi say frankly that the solution of our educational problem is for many of the Negroes to get out. I think this is right. The white schools are bad enough in our State and we cannot expect improvement of schools for the multitude of Negro children under those circumstances. The consolidated white schools in Coahoma County are a great improvement. But there are 5000 Negro children and only 1000 white children in the schools, while thousands of Negroes don't go to school at all. The compulsion's words: 'The people here can't rise by keeping the Negro down. They stay down with him.' The white man in Mississippi has suffered as much as the Negro from our lack of educational and other privileges. Even with a reduced Negro population, we must have Federal aid for education. The taxable State income is not sufficient to support good schools for both colored and white children.

"But the Negro veterans are disillusioned and disappointed. They come in and say 'how do you do?' and 'goodby.' The white veterans are scarcely less disappointed in the conditions they find here. They expected a more liberal state of mind at home, but find it is just about the same. Both groups are leaving but mostly the Negroes. What we need for the Negro boys who remain and who haven't finished grammar or high school would be a large vocational school to fit them to make a livelihood as mechanics, farm operators, carpenters or plumbers, as they cannot go back to school benches. There is a big ordnance plant in Flora, Miss., near Jackson, which the Federal Government was willing to turn over to the State. Our State Governor and our Department of Education were ready to go ahead, but some 300 people in the little town of Flora protested so violently against having Negro students in their neighborhood that the matter was dropped.

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Who has to worry about this exodus? Certainly not the South, where white and Negro alike welcome a better balance between the two populations. It is the North, the Midwest and the Atlantic Coast cities that must face the problem. They are now receiving only the advance battalions of the army that is soon to follow. During the war the Negro slums in our Northern and Midwestern industrial cities became shamefully overcrowded.

What are we going to do to protect this great postwar migration of Negro families and the cities that will not be able to give them all a living wage? We were heedless about the heavy migration of people into our war production centers. We are equally heedless now about the heavy remigration that is taking place. But here confronting us is a mass problem of the greatest importance to the whole Nation. Overconcentration of Negro population anywhere means race tensions and rivalries. Now that we are facing this postwar mass migration, are we going to continue our ruthless indifference or are we going to try to put into effect humane policies for the wise and advantageous distribution of the Negro families that are on the march?

LET US HAVE no illusion that the South will try to hold back the Negro. Mechanization in rice, sugar and cotton is the answer here to the shortage of labor. The majority of Southerners agree that the vote for the Negro is inevitable. But in areas like the Delta where the Negro population was three to one before the war and still is two to one, even the liberal-minded people are afraid of giving the Negro the ballot. They refuse to live under local governments elected and run by the Negro majorities. Therefore, they look upon the heavy migration as salvation. The urban areas feel the need for more industry but here in the Upper Delta most businessmen do not want heavy industrialization to hold Negro labor. They reason that small industries allied to cotton or other local agricultural products will occupy their idle workers during the seasonal slack, and furnish less competition for the skilled workers they need to run a mechanized cotton operation.

Some of the city merchants are apprehensive of the Negro exodus. But the businessmen and bankers assert that only a few merchants who cater to the lowest income groups will be affected. The salaries paid by mechanized agriculture will be comparable with those of industry and will mean a higher and steadier income for the majority of merchants.

"When we have a more balanced population," say the people here hopefully, "we can and will do more for the health and education of our Negro fellow citizens."

A SIMILAR POINT of view was expressed by many Negroes. "Our Negro population is not afraid of mechanization," said Mrs. Lillian Rogers Johnson, superintendent of Negro schools in Coahoma County. "On the whole, mechanization will be the emancipation of the Negroes who remain here. The old share-cropper system was slavery. It wasn't bad for those who had a good landlord that paid the market price. But the worker was wholly at the mercy of his employer and the bad ones took advantage of their power. This type of landlord now feels bitter toward the Negro. Since labor began to be scarce, they feel 'the Negro has let us down when we needed him most.' Of course the share-cropper has become unreliable under this system and walks out on the landlord, often induced to do so by some other farmer. If the Negro in the Delta is shiftless and incompetent, it is this system of slavery that made him so.

"Mechanization will emancipate the landlords as well as the worker because this unfair dealing often made them mean and narrow in outlook. It will be an education for both groups.

"Many white superintendents of schools in Mississippi say frankly that the solution of our educational problem is for many of the Negroes to get out. I think this is right. The white schools are bad enough in our State and we cannot expect improvement of schools for the multitude of Negro children under those circumstances. The consolidated white schools in Coahoma County are a great improvement. But there are 5000 Negro children and only 1000 white children in the schools, while thousands of Negroes don't go to school at all. To consolidate the 72 little Negro schools would take 100 buses and the cost of these alone is prohibitive.

"The Negroes are migrating not because they foresee mechanization. They are going because they are dissatisfied with economic conditions here and see no possibility of immediate improvement in education and health provisions. The Negroes can only get equal opportunities in Mississippi if their numbers are more equal to the whites. We see the reasonableness of this and are not disturbed by it," said Mrs. Johnson.

"THE NEGRO doesn't want the ballot to put himself in power but he wants the right to take part in governmental decisions. The masses of our uneducated people are not ready to use the ballot but those who are taxpayers, pay their poll taxes and register, have the education to vote intelligently. Yet the white primary prevents it. They naturally feel that taxation without representation is tyranny. The white people have exaggerated fears that the colored voters will elect only colored candidates. The Negro is not worried about social equality. He wants social justice. But the fear of the Negro vote has been exploited by unscrupulous white politicians here and in Washington until it is impossible for us to get the vote until our numbers are decreased.

"The Southeastern Jurisdiction of the Women's Service of the Methodist Church has come out frankly for the abolition of the poll tax. It is one of the most powerful and liberal groups in the South. They are working along very constructive lines for the Negro, including our veterans. They are now sending letters to every candidate in Mississippi asking them not to make race an issue in this election. We have also had two liberal governors—Paul B. Johnson and the present Governor Bailey—under whom the Negro has made great progress. But on the whole the present increase in migration out of the State can only help the Negroes that remain.

"I agree with Booker Washington's words: 'The people here can't rise by keeping the Negro down. They stay down with him.' The white man in Mississippi has suffered as much as the Negro from our lack of educational and other privileges. Even with a reduced Negro population, we must have Federal aid for education. The taxable State income is not sufficient to support good schools for both colored and white children.

"But the Negro veterans are disillusioned and disappointed. They come in and say 'how do you do?' and 'goodby.' The white veterans are scarcely less disappointed in the conditions they find here. They expected a more liberal state of mind at home, but find it is just about the same. Both groups are leaving but mostly the Negroes. What we need for the Negro boys who remain and who haven't finished grammar or high school would be a large vocational school to fit them to make a livelihood as mechanics, farm operators, carpenters or plumbers, as they cannot go back to school benches. There is a big ordnance plant in Flora, Miss., near Jackson, which the Federal Government was willing to turn over to the State. Our State Governor and our Department of Education were ready to go ahead, but some 300 people in the little town of Flora protested so violently against having Negro students in their neighborhood that the matter was dropped.

"THAT'S THE KIND of thing the Negro has to expect in Mississippi under present conditions. Some of the old camps that are further away from towns could easily be taken over for such a vocational school.

"There is less danger of deliberately fomented race riots in our Delta territory than in other parts of the South. A bad system like the share-cropper system has its good sides as well as its bad ones. It kept the two races in closer contact. They know each other better. Many of the bigger planters have always had a very humane attitude toward their Negro workers. The more secure the white man is economically and morally, the kinder he is to the Negro. Such people are not afraid to greet us on the street but the lower class of white people try to impress us with their superiority."

Mrs. Johnson has the quiet dignity of the educated Negro who has overcome all bitterness. "I'd never let anybody drag me so low as to make me hate," she again quoted Booker Washington. You've got to rid yourself of those hindrances to be able to help your fellow Negroes. I have been of use to our people because I am not afraid to speak out, but I have never done it with a chip on my shoulder."

Here are warnings by members of the white and the Negro races in the Mississippi Delta, that the mass migration of Negroes is under way and will increase with an ever-growing volume. The white leaders of Southern thought are willing to cooperate with the North in helping to guide the mass exodus. One of the large planters who has not yet mechanized and is therefore suffering acutely from labor shortage, said to me:

"The national ratio of white people to Negro is 10 to 1. Under those conditions there is every possibility of harmony and complete understanding. Overconcentration means friction between the races whether it exists in the North or the South. There should be a Nation-wide effort toward guidance of the Negro migrant to his own advantage and that of the country. The postwar migration should be planned with every consideration and care so that it will not increase the evil effects of the last one. I am sure the leaders of the South will be willing to cooperate in such a constructive effort."